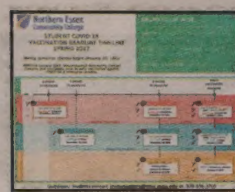




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NECC Observer

The award-winning student newspaper of Northern Essex Community College • Haverhill and Lawrence, Mass.



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Fall 2021 • Volume 85 • Issue Number 2 • Dec. 2, 2021

News Bytes

NECC IT Services reminds students to be “extra diligent” when reviewing emails. In a recent email they shared that there has been an increase in phishing attacks on the college. Everyone is asked to ignore unexpected emails or those requesting sensitive information. If in doubt reach out to phishing@necc.mass.edu.

Knight's basketball player's hair style has become a viral sensation. Even ESPN's SportsCenter has shared shots of the player and his do with their 26.37 million Instagram followers, dubbing Matthew D'Amato the “Mullet Mamba” in the process.

Are you an NECC student alum, faculty or staff? Do you have photos of you and your friends and classmates around campus? A snap shot by the beautiful mural in the Dimitry Building or a gorgeous pic of the fall foliage on the Haverhill campus? Photos can be shared on social media by using the hashtag #NECC60. You can also add your photos to the NECC website, search for “photo mosaic”. Photos will be collected now through Jan. 14.

The celebration continues...



Photo by Mike Dean

“Tiny Beautiful Things” takes the stage

BY LEO WELLOCK
Correspondent

On Friday, Nov. 5, the Northern Essex Community College theater department, “held an outdoor performance of the play “Tiny Beautiful Things.”

This was a special performance for staff members and students to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the college, the 50th anniversary of the Haverhill campus, and the 30th anniversary of the Dimitry Building in Lawrence.

The play is based on the memoir by “Wild” author Cheryl Strayed and was adapted to stage by Nia Vardalos of “My Big Fat Greek Wedding” fame.

Strayed, played by award-winning actress and current NECC student Gwyn-

nette Glickman, writes for an advice column under the alias “Sugar.”

Throughout the play, she attempts to help those who write to her by addressing their questions and problems with sincere honesty, going as far as sharing her own traumatic stories of a similar nature.

Zaida Buzan, Remani Lizana, and Natalie Scott play supporting roles portraying various troubled people seeking out advice from “Sugar.”

As the sun began to set and the air became cooler, the subjects discussed became more mature. Topics ranging from jealousy, work relationships, incest, infidelity, miscarriage, and physical abuse to name a few, complete with coarse lan-

guage and really frank descriptions especially from “Sugar” herself.

“Tiny Beautiful Things” was certainly not for the easily disturbed. In addition to the disquieting content mentioned above, a lot of palpable emotional tension was powerfully conveyed by the four actors. It was so intense, we the audience could feel it ourselves as we were in the moment. It's a blunt and moving play that despite all the potentially distressing subjects discussed, ends with a sense of relatability and most importantly, hope.

“I thought that all four performances were extraordinary,” said Brianne Beatrice,

Continued on page 4

Important dates:

Dec. 3- Bryant University Virtual Transfer Chats. All day event on Zoom.

Bentley University Transfer Event. 9:30 to 10am. Recurring event.

Dec. 6- Gender and Sexuality Alliance Meeting 4 to 5pm in Haverhill. Room TC 130 in the Hartleb Technology Center.

Dec. 7- NECC Mobile Market. At the Haverhill campus Beharkis Student Center 12:30 to 1:30pm. The Lawrence campus Dimitry Building 1:30 to 2:30pm.

Dec. 9- Comedian Lucas Bohn on Zoom 3 to 4pm.

Dec. 21- Final Exam Period ends for Day and Evening Classes

Dec. 22- Fall Graduation Petitions Due to Registrar's Office 8am to 4:30pm.

Dec. 23- Fall Semester Grades due by noon.

How to find security around each campus:

Haverhill Campus
100 Elliott St., Spurr Building, Room 110C

Lawrence Campus
45 Franklin St. main lobby

Call 978.556.3333 from a cell phone. Extension 3333 from any campus phone on either campus.

Editorial

observer.necc.mass.edu @neccobserver facebook.com/neccobserver

Good bye, farewell and thank you

By ISA GRULLON
Editor-in-Chief

And just like that, the second (and final) issue of the fall 2021 Observer is here.

My final issue.

The 2021 fall semester has been bittersweet, filled with ups, downs, and everything in between. For myself and many of us, the last two years have been difficult to say the least.

It has, however, allowed us to show ourselves and each other just what we are made of. There is grit among the blood, sweat, and tears. A demonstrated perseverance only seen in those who have everything to gain by pushing forward and too much to lose by fall back.

I want to take this opportunity

to say "thank you" to everyone.

If you have ever answered a question I have asked -- Thank you.

If you have ever posed for a photograph at my request -- Thank you.

If you have ever replied to an email or a text from me -- Thank you.

If you have ever picked up a copy of the Observer -- Thank you.

Professor Rattigan, thank you for being there when I was at one of my lowest points and was not sure I would or could continue. Taking your public speaking class during the winter intersession of 2020 kept me going.

Professor Lyng, thank you for your continued support. You made me feel like I could do anything, even when it was two in the morning and my editing software would not cooperate. Your energy and enthusiasm are undeniably infectious.

Dean Callahan, thank you for pushing the Liberal Arts department to be all that it has become and embracing journalism and communications in such a way that it has made it possible for students like myself to thrive.

Ernie Greenslade, thank you for your support and guidance over the last year and a half. You are an invaluable resource for all whose

path you cross. I hope we will continue to cross paths for years to come.

Professor Shafer, thank you for ALL of the things. Thank you for encouraging me to join the Observer back when I didn't even know what AP Style was. Thank you for continuing to push me forward while still being cautious as to not overwhelm me. Thank you for your understanding and your flexibility. Thank you for being available via email and text, always. Thank you for getting up early and staying up late and always reminding me that we are all still learning.

PACE family, we have only just met and I'm sorry it took

me so long, but I am so glad to have finally met you all. You've shown me that it's ok to ask for help and that it's all within reach for the taking.

What the future will hold for me next, I cannot predict with certainty, but I know that I am now better prepared for what is to come, more than ever before, thanks in great part to Northern Essex and its community.

I hope to some day be able to give back all that I have received during my time here. At the very least I plan to pay it forward.

This is "good bye" for now but I'll definitely "see ya later!"

NECC Observer

The award-winning student newspaper of Northern Essex Community College

Room C318, Spurr building,
100 Elliot St. Haverhill, MA 01830

Newsroom 978.556.3027
Adviser 978.556.3027

Advertising 978.556.3027
observer@necc.mass.edu

The NECC Observer reserves the right to edit, condense and refuse all submissions.

Fall 2021 Observer Staff

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : Isa Grullon
OPINION EDITOR : Now hiring
NEWS EDITOR : Now hiring
FEATURES EDITOR : Alex Mahoney
A&E EDITOR : Shaun Hood
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR : Now hiring
SPORTS EDITOR : Jose Rodriguez
WEB EDITORS : Isa Grullon, Shaun Hood,
: Alex Mahoney, Jose Rodriguez
FACULTY ADVISER : Mary Jo Shafer

Have you taken Journalism I? Are you taking it now? Would you like to be on the Observer staff? Then submit your resume to observer@necc.mass.edu.

Publication Schedule

Issue #	Publication Date	Ad/Copy Deadline
#1	Oct. 28	Oct. 21
#2	Dec. 2	Nov. 24

We welcome letters and articles from our readers. You can submit via email, and must include your name and phone number for verification. Write "Letter" or "Article to Editor" in the subject line so we notice it right away.

Send your letters to observer@necc.mass.edu

We try to publish all letters we receive, but we reserve the right to edit or reject those we receive.

The NECC Observer is a member of the Associated Collegiate Press, College Media Advertisers Inc., the Colombia Scholastic Press Association, and the New England Press Association.

Roaming Reporter

What is your favorite holiday?



Shaun Hood
Journalism

Christmas. I like to get creative with gifts. It's also always great to shop local.



David Arivella
Academic Technology Assistant

New Year's Eve. It's usually associated with hope and positivity



Paul Veloz
IT Department

Thanksgiving and 4th of July for all the food and drinks.



Jose Rodriguez
Journalism

Christmas and New Year's Eve. That's when friends and family get together.

Opinion

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'Build Back Better Act' would expand Pell Grants

Families would welcome more help with paying for college

BY KIMBERLY ZAPPALA
Correspondent

President Joe Biden's plan for free two-year community college in his Build Back Better bill has been cut, but he still has a plan to try and reduce the cost of tuition for students.

The expansion of the Pell Grant Award is the newest higher education headliner for the President's watered-down bill.

Roughly seven million students have received a Pell Grant award over the past five years.

The amount of a Pell Grant is awarded on a sliding scale and is based on a families estimated financial need, determined by information a student provides on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid, otherwise known as FAFSA, and the award does not need to be repaid.

Currently the maximum Pell Grant award for the 2021-2022 award year is \$6,495 according to the US Department of Education. Biden's new proposal would increase

the Pell Grant to \$7,045 each award year, up 8.5%.

The change would take effect next year and last until 2026, according to the new version of the Build Back Better bill, which is still under negotiation.

Students and administrators will welcome the added award benefit for low-income students, but it will not provide full financial relief.

Students still end up taking out loans for other school related expenses such as books, laptop, transportation, housing and food.

The additional expenses can total an average cost of around \$10,000 for a full-time student.

Although Pell Grants can be used for some of those expenses it just does not stretch out far enough.

Student Loan debt can harm the entire economy in at least three important ways.

First, the impacts of the debt are felt mostly by those from the lowest-resource families, which compounds the effects of inequality passed from one generation to the next.

Second, it limits the purchasing power of those tied down with student debt. Third, these debts burden people from generating wealth through means such as buying a home or starting a business.

Steven Rosado, a parent from Haverhill who has a daughter hoping to attend college next fall, said "My daughter will be the first member of my family to be able to go to college."

He added, "My hopes for her is that she will get an education but not have to spend years bogged down by debt the rest of her life."

Student debt, which is around a total of \$1.6 trillion is more than credit card debt and every other kind of debt except home mortgages.

The average student graduates with about \$37,000 of debt with many owing much more.

Biden's proposal will aim to increase the award for students who receive means-tested benefits through federal government programs such as Medicare, Supplemental Security Income and Supple-

mental Nutrition Programs (SNAP).

Per the bill, students who benefit from these programs will automatically have a student aid index equal to \$1,500 for the applicant.

This change will also apply to an applicant whose parents or guardians have received means-tested benefits within the last 24 months.

A CNBC survey found evidence suggesting increased access to community college raises net earnings, especially for low-income students.

Some people are calling on Congress to increase the maximum Pell Grant award to \$10,000 which would help even the poorest students afford to attend community college in most states and leave two years later debt free.

Theodore Bahtsevanos, a Haverhill resident who will be attending NECC for the spring term to focus on medical bill coding said, "I was hoping that Biden would be able to follow through on his campaign promise for free two-year college, but something is better than nothing."

He added, "The Pell Grant will at least help me cover some of my education expenses, but I was honestly hoping for more. I really believed Biden would have been able to pull off free college, seeing that he also fell through on the minimum wage increase."

President Biden is off to the right start using the existing Pell Grant to address college affordability, but a \$550 bump to the maximum grant will not be sufficient.

The issues of education access, affordability and student debt are mostly ignored in his new proposal.

President Biden, whose wife is Dr. Jill Biden, a community college professor, stressed at a CNN Townhall that took place in October 2021, that making two-year community college free remains a priority for his administration even though it did not make it into the Build Back Better bill.

"I have three more years in office" Biden went onto say, "I'm going to get it done."

Climate change is key concern for high school students

Teens are looking for ways to help the environment

BY SOPHIA BURNS
Correspondent

Students at Newburyport High School remarkably still have faith in humanity even as we continue to sink farther and farther into irreversible climate change consequences.

There is so much information out in the world thanks to the internet, and that can be hard for people.

It is easy to get overwhelmed with billions of information screaming for your attention all at the same time.

But it's an amazing resource when school just isn't cutting it with information on something massive, like how to reduce your carbon footprint.

Sadie Riordon, a senior at Newburyport High School, touches upon this; "[It] doesn't seem like it's on [the schools] radar to care

about that honestly, I haven't seen any effort from the school. As for the internet, I could search up anything I wanted to."

She uses the internet to do her research about how she can help the environment when it's not being taught as widely as it should be.

Newburyport has an advanced placement environmental science class and field studies elective, which are saturated with climate change teachings.

But that seems to be as far as it goes.

Olivia Barbera, a junior at Newburyport high, has a different perspective.

She feels that, "our community in general, our school and our town, has been very good, teachers make it a point to talk about it in class. And we have

the internet, there's basically endless information on how we can reduce our co2 emissions and our impact. But it's whether or not people in the community will actually take the initiative to learn about it."

Mia Rodriguez, a senior at Newburyport High School thinks that, "there's information on how to reduce CO2 but it's hard to navigate. It tends to be very big stuff and can intimidate people if they can't fully eliminate certain things from their lives."

If someone were to look up the phrase 'how do I reduce my carbon footprint' right now, they'd have 127,000,000 million results in 0.73 seconds. That's a lot of information.

And the top five things that come up are, according to the European Youth

Portal, How to reduce my carbon footprint?:

- 1.) eat seasonally (forget strawberries in the winter)
- 2.) Limit how much meat you eat, especially beef.
- 3.) Eat fish from local fish markets
4. Use reusable shopping bags instead of plastic
- 5.) Buy only what you need, don't waste things.

For the people whose favorite food is strawberries, that's not something they're going to want to hear.

Even though it's extremely helpful to the planet to only eat what's in season, our society has gotten so accustomed to being able to have whatever kind of food whenever they want.

It's hard to just take that away. And that's not something we have to do necessarily.

As Mia said, it's more about being able to; "start small. You can't immediately fix everything but reducing plastic use and recycling/composting can make a big difference if everyone does it!"

Even though there is a lot of doom and gloom in mainstream media, everything isn't all bad.

Things can still be turned around and there is still time left to make things right.

Making small changes like eating one plant based meal a week, can make a difference.

Some people need to start small, and that's perfectly fine.

Others need to make big changes and feel best taking things a more dramatic route.

At the end of the day, the most important thing is if you decide to do something, no matter the size.



News

Continued from page 1



Photo by Mike Dean

President Lane Glenn hosts the special showing of "Tiny Beautiful Things."

director and Performing Arts and Communication program. "I am so unbelievably proud of the production as a whole."

Vardalos congratulated the crew via Twitter, encouraging them to "break many legs." The performance

was held at the grassy knoll just outside of Bentley Library on the Haverhill campus.

A simple stage was constructed to provide the actors a platform to play off of.

The event was hosted by President Lane A. Glenn.

A substantial crowd of attendees were offered hot chocolate, hot cider, and cider doughnuts free of charge.

In commemoration of the anniversary, gift bags were handed out to the audience containing an NECC thermal cup as well as a large

decorated, frosted butter cookie.

"We had very large crowds and I was extremely grateful," said Beatrice. "The entire experience was truly life changing."

The event was considered a big success.



Photo by Mike Dean

Refreshments were provided for the audience to enjoy.



Photo by Mike Dean

A lighting display of the number 60 in honor of the college's anniversary.

News

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A new way of learning

How the coronavirus pandemic is changing education

By HANNAH LONGO
Correspondent

As schools around the country are opening back up and students are returning to in-person classes for the first time in nearly two years, educators and students are facing conflicting opinions about opening back up.

Most Massachusetts elementary, middle, and high schools have returned to in-person instruction with a mask mandate in place.

At Northern Essex Community College, which remained mainly virtual or hybrid this fall, many courses will return to in-person instruction at the start of the 2022 spring semester.

The campus is also putting in place a vaccine mandate. Some students are fearful about returning to classrooms while others have adjusted to, or even prefer, the online learning model.

Others are excited to return to a semblance of normalcy, see their friends and classmates, and/or have a more stable routine.

For student Leiliana Igartua, returning to in-person learning is an exciting, but nerve-racking notion.

"I am a bit nervous since it will be my first semester all in-person. I don't know what to expect this semester, but I'm hopeful I will get the full college experience."

The coronavirus pandemic was particularly difficult for college-aged students.

Approximately 1.7 million college freshmen of 2020 were stuck with almost entirely online classes. They lived at home and had minimal social interaction with peers and teachers.

According to the Intercultural Development Research Association, two out of every five young adults aged 18-24 reported having, "at least one adverse mental or behavioral health condition during the COVID-19 pandemic."

The IDRA also reported that as many as 71% of San Antonio students believe that virtual learning was more stressful than traditional school.



Students walk from building to building at the Haverhill campus for inperson classes.

Photo by Isa Grullon

Igartua explains that for her, "I missed human interaction and I find it easier to learn in a classroom with other students."

For many, having access to teachers, tutors, and other on-campus resources is a game-changer.

Jose Rodriguez, a communications and journalism major, says, "I feel like [in-person classes] will be good because teachers can explain the work better and I can get a better understanding of the materials and concentrate more."

However, for some students, online learning introduced them to a whole new world of education which many grew to prefer.

As Igartua says, "I like the fact that I can hop online at any time and get the classes done on my time."

Rodriguez echoed this sentiment, "I liked that we could manage our time and we could be flexible in our own schedule and knowing what works best for us."

While many students struggled with mental health, loneliness, concentration, etc., many reveled in the freedom and independence that online

learning provided. Particularly, Black and Hispanic students enjoyed the online learning model. According to CNBC, "68% of Black respondents and 60% of Hispanic respondents feel positive about online learning. 75% of Black students and 54% of Hispanic students say they were equally able to learn new material online and in-person, compared with 46% of White students."

Above all else, students want options moving forward.

According to a survey published by the Online Learning Consortium, the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies, and the University Professional and Continuing Education Association, nearly half (46%) of surveyed students "strongly agree" that they would like to take fully online courses in the future.

A further 73% of students "somewhat agree" and 68% indicated that they were interested in taking hybrid courses. Teacher opinions are often similar, yet different, from the voices of students.

As Matthew Kennedy, a seventh and eighth-grade teacher, reports to The New York Times, "Teaching in-

volves human connection, and I feel like that's been taken away from me."

Conversely, other teachers have found that online learning has provided some beneficial aspects.

As Joshua Fleming, a ninth-grade teacher, told The New York Times, "I believe that this distance learning has enhanced portions of my teaching. I am now allowed to utilize technology that perhaps I haven't had time to before. I've also noticed that my students who struggled academically in class are excelling online."

So, what is the solution? What is the future of schooling in a country where so many students are at odds with what kind of education they want?

Most surveys and statistics indicate that the best way forward for students and teachers is to understand their needs. The pandemic highlighted technology inequality and the sheer number of students, many of whom are students of color, who do not have easy access to the Internet.

Furthermore, the pandemic proved just how important communication and relation-

ships between students and faculty members are. Compassion, understanding, and above all else, equity in education seems to be the way forward.

The National Education Association outlined a few key points that should be considered as schools move back to in-person learning, "Differentiating lessons for different learning needs, ensuring adequate intensity when making decisions about extending the school day or year. . . . Creating an equity plan with stated goals and objectives to allow for equitable learning opportunities for underserved students."

The pandemic changed so many things about the way educators teach, and the way students learn. And though there was loss and heartache and challenges within that, COVID-19 has also provided an opportunity for schools and institutions of higher learning to actively listen and engage with what their students and faculty need and want in a way that has never been done before.

News

Frequently asked questions about vaccine mandate

ADELA VILORIO
Correspondent

The clock is ticking if you are a student at Northern Essex Community College who has been waiting to get fully vaccinated.

Back in September the Massachusetts Community Colleges issued a statement saying students, faculty and staff will be required to be fully vaccinated by January 2022.

Those without the the required documents for proof of their vaccination will have to turn to online schooling for the Spring Semester 2022.

On Oct. 18 there was a FAQ posted on the NECC homepage regarding more information on the vaccine requirement.

It holds important information to ensure stu-

“

NECC is hosting two mobile vaccination clinics on the Haverhill and Lawrence campus. The vaccination clinics will be held:

Dec. 1	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Haverhill Campus, Tech Center 103B
Dec. 2	8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lawrence Campus, Dimitry Building

For more information, visit Mobile Vaccination Clinic website, COVID-19 Vaccination Frequently Asked Questions or email immunizations@necc.mass.edu.

dents who chose to get vaccinated have an easy process of returning back to in-person school for the spring semester.

One highly important detail students should know is that the community colleges are using the Centers for Disease Control’s definition of a full vaccination.

To be considered fully vaccinated students and faculty will need to have two weeks with their second dose of Pfizer or Moderna or two weeks with a single dose of Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen.

Now that it is November those who are interested need to have started the process. For the students who are

looking for locations to receive their vaccine, the FAQ says many community colleges are hosting vaccine clinics.

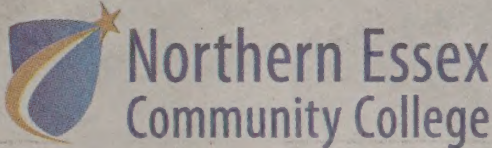
The NECC homepage will provide more information with times and dates of upcoming vaccine clinics and policy updates.

Students can now upload documentation of their vaccine

status on the college’s website.

Students can also download a “reasonable accommodation” form if they wish to request an exemption from the mandate.

For more information, visit <https://www.necc.mass.edu/public-safety/coronavirus-information/student-covid-19-vaccination-requirement>.



STUDENT COVID-19 VACCINATION DEADLINE TIMELINE SPRING 2022

Spring semester classes begin January 19, 2022

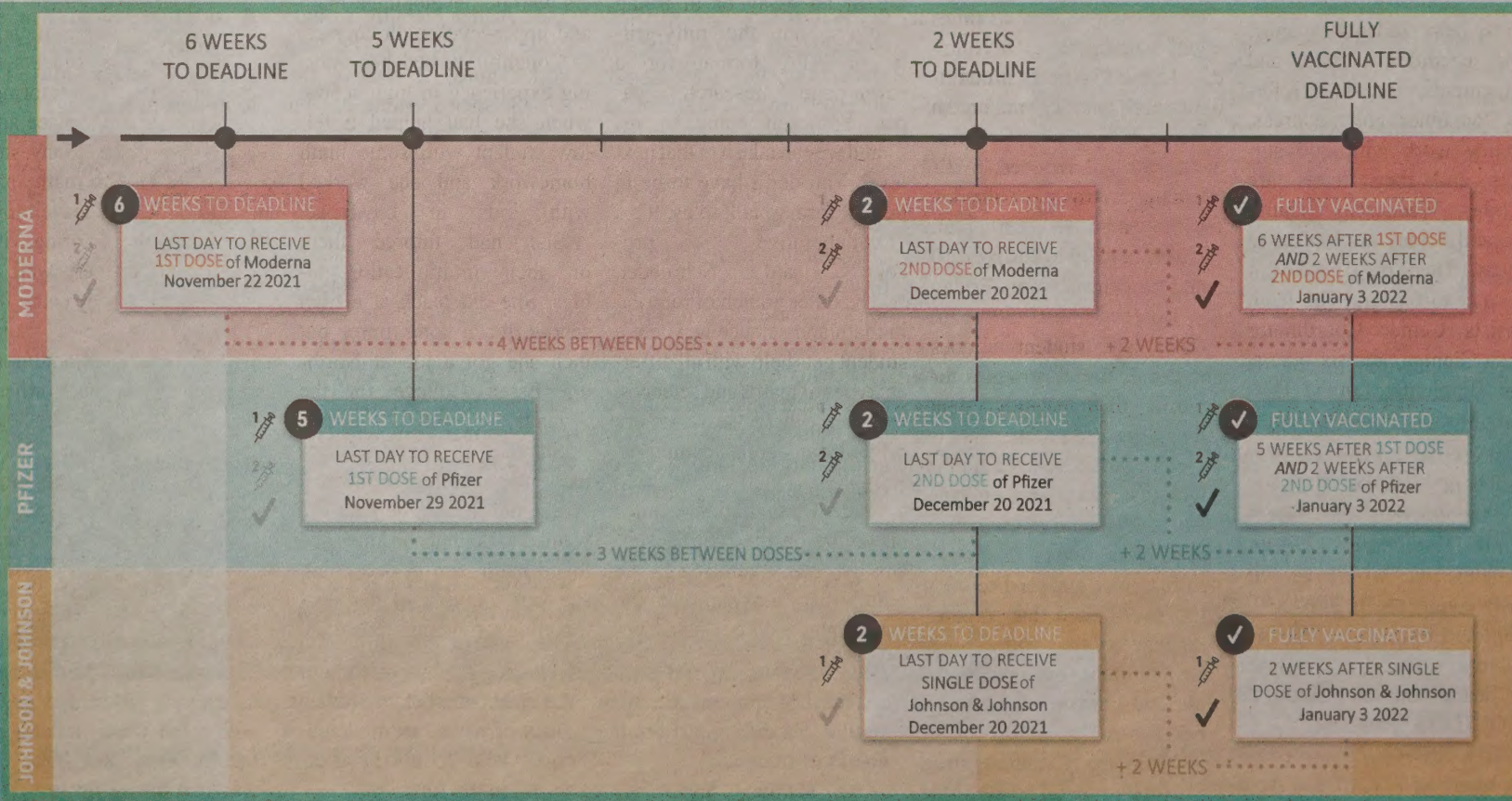
Effective January 2022, Massachusetts Community College students and employees must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 if coming on campus.

KNOW YOUR DOSE:

MODERNA: 2 Doses | 4 Weeks Between Doses +2 Weeks = Fully Vaccinated

PFIZER: 2 Doses | 3 Weeks Between Doses +2 Weeks = Fully Vaccinated

JOHNSON & JOHNSON: Single Dose +2 Weeks = Fully Vaccinated



Questions: Students contact immunizations@necc.mass.edu or 978-556-3700

News

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Here to help

Tutors and coaches aim to help students to succeed

ALEXIX ENO

Correspondent

Northern Essex Community College has many ways to support students.

The two that will be discussed today will be academic coaching and tutoring.

These are available on both campuses with zoom calls, or a student can go in person now as well.

A student will find academic coaching in the Spurr building on the Haverhill campus in the room labeled C211 or Lawrence campus in L202 in the John R. Dimitry Building.

Tutoring can be located in the same building as coaching and for both a student can go online to Navigate and set up an appointment or call the 978-556-3847 for the coaching. For tutoring, students can call 978-556-3411. For both a student needs to leave their full name and their student I.D. number.

Academic coaching is a great program and has a fantastic team of people willing to help students with their educational classes.

They offer strategies for success, brainstorm for assignments, help students organize their schedules, classes, and assignments, and share referrals for other college areas.

They work with 700 students and their times are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Then on Tuesday it is 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The team consists Center Coordinator Linda Giampa, and six others, Pam Belmonte, Lorena Holguin, Marion Howley, Jennifer Jones, Amy Joyall, Laurie Sorota, and Denise Trinidad.

Belmonte and Joyall are on the Haverhill campus, but all the others can be found at both campuses, and their emails are found on the NECC website.

Belmonte wants the students to know, "Our goal is to help you negative your college experience and to feel successful along with motivative and excitement. We help you improve your skills and manage the college experience."

There are two types of different tutoring, one for just reading and writing; then there is another center for math, science, and extra. For writing/reading tutoring, they have about four people named Kellie Schroeder, Sara Codair, Joe Derry, and Janice Grant Menes. Like the coaching, they have specific people who go to both campuses: Codair and Derry go to Lawrence and Haverhill, then Grant Menes is only at the Lawrence center.

Most subjects people go to tutoring for reading and writing are English Composition I and II because of all the papers they have to write in those classes.

But it also depends on what semester it is; sometimes, they get a lot of people from the Human Services class, and if people spread the word on the tutoring service at the college.

Their times are Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Then on Friday, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., on the Haverhill Campus,

and for Lawrence, it's Monday to Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Then on Wednesday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., on Friday it's 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

If a student does not have time to go for in-person tutoring, they can always email them at tutoringcenter@necc.mass.edu with detailed assessments for revisions from one of the tutors.

They do not do anything math or science related, besides a lab report.

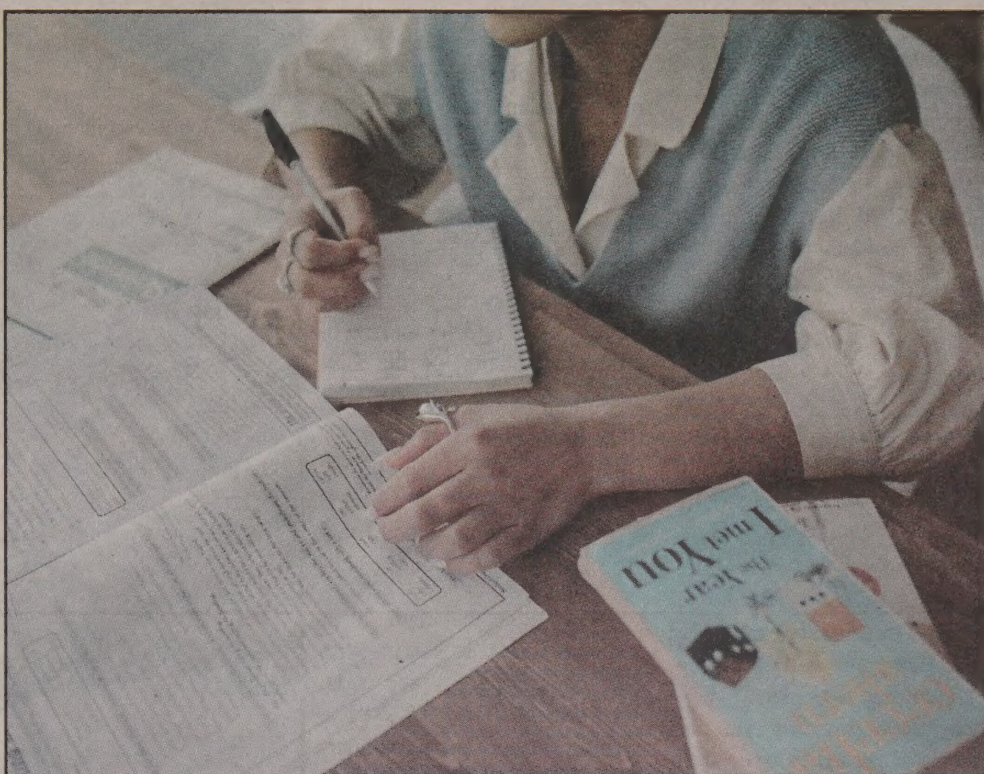


Photo courtesy Polina Tankilevitch from Pexels

NECC has tutoring and academic coaching available.

"What I would love the students to understand is our service is it's free, and they can come to us with any question either your in any phase like the brainstorming of an essay or in trying figure out the nitty-gritty of APA format for a seven-page research paper. You can come to us, and we can take it to that next level. You don't have to be in perfect form to talk to us. It's a collaborative process," said Schroeder.

The other branch of tutoring in math and science is where a student gets help with all different types of maths and sciences.

Again, these sessions are offered at both campuses.

A student can find the times all online on the NECC website by putting tutoring in the search bar and can use the same email address listed be-

fore setting up appointments.

A student can walk in at the Spurr Building room C 205, and for Lawrence, it's Dimitry Building room L 202. Ann Coughlin and Tracy Standen are math tutors and teachers who do development math and upper-level math courses.

Coughlin started her tutoring experience in high school when she had helped a fellow student with some math homework and she worked with kids in Lawrence.

She had tutored them on their multiplication tables. She did teach at a high school for a long time, but then she got a job at Northern Essex College for the math center.

Standing's background starts like most college students. She did not know what she wanted to do, but she knew she loved math, and at one point, she was thinking of her own traveling tourism business.

She took many classes to figure out what she wanted to do, but finally, she focused on math courses and became a math teacher. She taught high school and grammar school for a little and then she landed at Northern Essex College. Coughlin and Standen want the students to know about the math tutoring, "It's a very friendly place and encouraging place. Many students come in with math anxiety and hope they leave more confident after tutoring with them. People do very well in their class when they come for tutoring," they said.

All these services and more can be found on the Northern Essex Community College website and in Navigate to make appointments for a walk-in.

They hope to see more students there soon.

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‘The Writing Project’ is looking for your work

NECC’s online writing repository features students’ essays

By KASEY GORDON
Correspondent

The Writing Project is an exclusive site where NECC’s community can publish and access model articles and essays. Due to low submission rates in 2020 during the height of the pandemic, The Writing Project is eagerly looking for new entries for 2022.

Serving as a repository for articles and essays of all interests, The Writing Project is a valuable resource for students, staff and faculty.

The site was created to be an online library for exceptional and exemplary writing assignments for students and teachers to use as a sample for both learning and teaching.

According to the site, “These essays are outstanding examples of what it means to write from personal experience, illustrate persuasive and robust argumentation, and display solid research and analysis on a variety of original and exciting topics.”

Clare Thompson, professor of Developmental English and co-faculty adviser of The Writing Project, comments “...the website’s mission is to be a resource for students, faculty and staff who are looking for inspiration, or support, or a community in which they can learn more about reading and writing college essays.”

On the site you can find the Writing Archive tab which houses compositions of all natures; anywhere from a 2019 personal essay on the healing experience of writing to a

2017 persuasive essay about the effects of cyber crime.

Referencing the only requirement for submission, Thompson also says “... [The Writing Project’s] mission is to showcase essays students have written for one of their NECC classes during the current academic year.”

Patricia Portanova is a professor of English and program coordinator of the Liberal Arts: Writing Option, who also serves as one of the editors of The Writing Project.

“Our objective is to encourage NECC students to submit their writing for publication on The Writing Project website so that their talent and hard work is shared with a wide audience,” she said.

Portanova also says “The Writing Project is a wonderful opportunity to publish writing (and put the publication on a resume). We hope to receive many excellent submissions this year.”

The Writing Project is always looking for new pieces with this year’s submission specifications being a piece written for a NECC course during the 2021-2022 academic year, including 2021 summer courses. Essays must be in either MLA or APA format with in-text citations and a works cited page if needed.

Visit The Writing Project website at: <https://northernessexwriters.wordpress.com> A simple essay submission form can be found on the website under the “Submit Your Essay” tab.

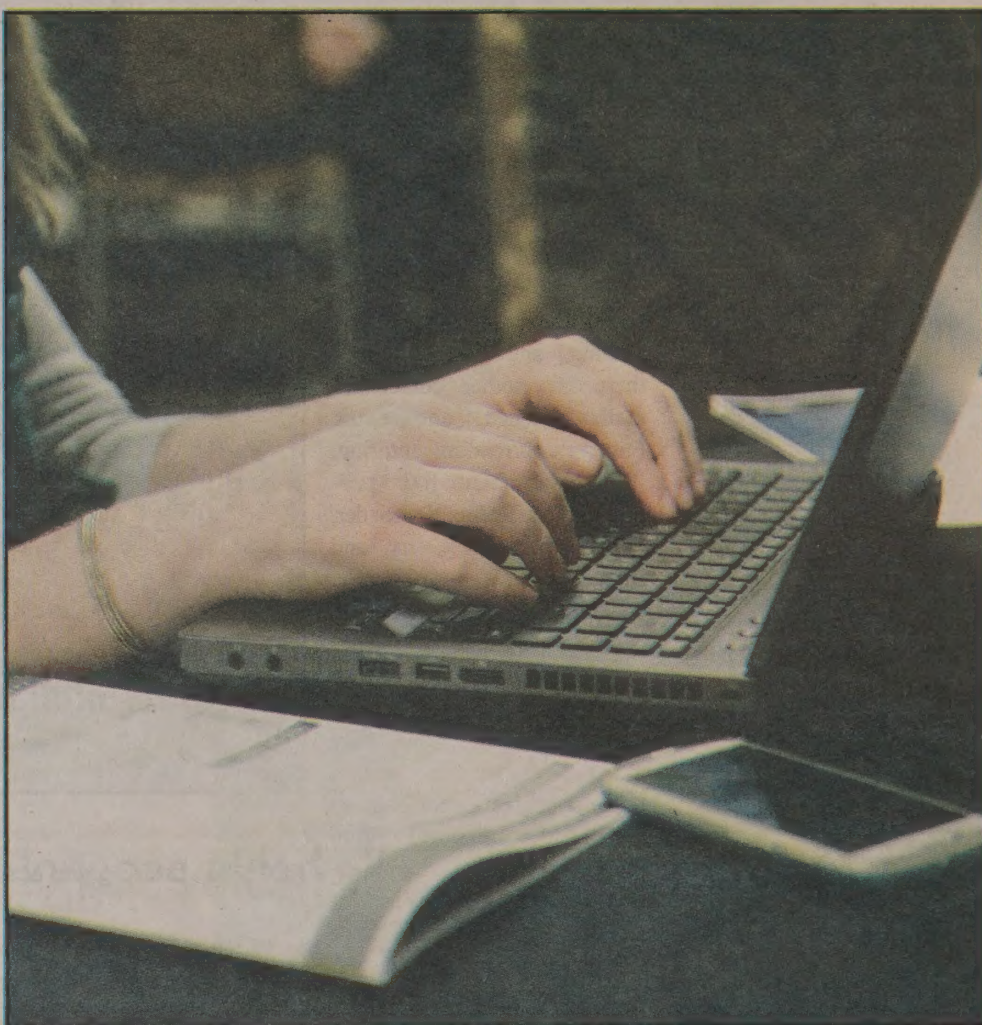


Photo courtesy plexels.com

The Writing Project website is always looking for new pieces. Visit The Writing Project website at: <https://northernessexwriters.wordpress.com>.

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Our objective is to encourage NECC students to submit their writing for publication on The Writing Project website so that their talent and hard work is shared with a wide audience.”

- Patricia Portanova

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Shuttle cancellation dismays students

By ALEX MAHONEY
Features editor

For most of this semester, students at NECC were able to travel between campuses with relative ease using the shuttle bus that goes from Haverhill to Lawrence.

However, around the end of October the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit shuttle bus was canceled.

The reason stated for this was that not enough students were using it.

Many students had been depending on this bus to get back and forth between the two campuses.

When asked how students were being affected, Stephanie Haskell, the coordinator of student activities, stated, "Yes I have seen students affected. We have had students bring their concerns to SGA as well as to me personally in student life. We had a student come to the last SGA meeting who prepared his

concern professionally and expressed it during the meeting."

Some students also did not know that the shuttle bus was shutting down until the day that it did.

"I was most concerned personally that students and employees were not informed that the MVRTA shuttle route 56 was being canceled on 10/29 due to not enough students using it," said Haskell. Student

government has been doing its best to help the situation.

Student Government members "gathered concerns via email, phone, in person, and chat," said Haskell.

They compiled the concerns and sent them to the person in charge of this at the college.

They sent an update email to all students about the new routes to use and that NECC is covering their cost for the remainder of the semester."

According to the NECC

website, as of Nov. 8, "NECC students may ride any MVRTA route for free, for the remainder of the semester, when presenting a student ID.

"Routes 1 and 51 will allow access to NECC campuses.

The bus stop for the Lawrence campus is located at Buckley Transportation Center at 295 Common St. in Lawrence.

The bus stop for the Haverhill Campus is located in front of the Student Center at 100 Elliott St.

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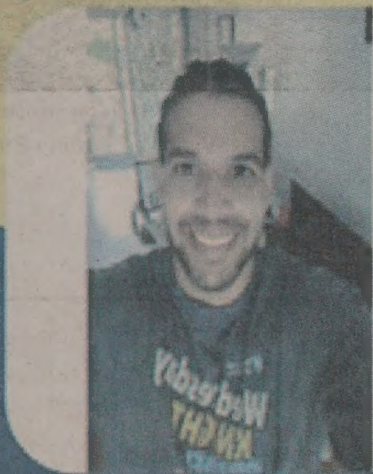
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Will COVID-19 spring into action next semester?

Students share their hopes and fears

By LEILIANA IGARTUA
Correspondent

With the fall semester nearing an end many students are thrilled for the break that comes with it.

On the other hand there is reason for concern with the new COVID-19 vaccine requirement and the campus opening back up to the entire student population.

Aaron Abernathy, who uses they/them pronouns, explains what they are excited for and what they are most concerned about.

"I'm mostly excited for the warm weather that is yet to come, as well as photography class. I can't wait for spring to start because of the many opportunities I will be able to get.", they continued to say, "I feel as though the school has done well with dealing with COVID-19, much better than the campus I was on last year, I am concerned that since a lot of kids will be returning in person, COVID might surge again."

Abernathy also says "I feel a bit safer on campus and

more at ease because there is more social interaction with other students and not just my family."

Aliyah Quevillon, has more to say on how she feels. "I am so excited! I can't wait to see how full the campus will be."

"I will be able to see all my friends and I only imagine the campus will be full of people," she goes on.

"I am kind of worried because it will be a big change for me but I am excited to be able to have the full college experience. Plus, everyone will

hopefully be vaccinated and we won't have to worry too much about covid spreading and everyone getting sick."

"I am pretty thrilled to come back to campus. It will be much easier since everyone is going to be vaccinated, maybe we won't have to wear these masks inside in the near future," says Ryan Dellechiaie.

"I'm also really excited to see what campus will be like during the spring. I also think that it is possible the covid mandate will force kids home

which in my opinion is unfortunate to them, although it is only to keep everyone safe I hope to see all my friends on campus next semester."

With the Spring semester just a hop, skip and a jump away, many kids are eager to see what the new season will bring.

Will it come in like a lamb and out like a lion? Or will newer problems begin to arise with more students coming to campus?

Coping with end of semester stress

Finding creative ways to deal with busy season

EVTHOKIA DIMAKIS
Correspondent

How are students are coping with end of semester stress and reaching deadlines before winter intermission?

November is a time of familial gatherings, giving thanks, raking leaves, and for college students around the country, cramming for finals and making study plans.

At Northern Essex Community College, students are finding creative ways to deal with end of the semester stress and finish the semester successfully.

Christian Furtado, 20, a second year student at NECC, said "I'm a fulltime student and a fulltime worker at two different jobs. You know what I do to relieve stress? I sing."

Furtado has a passion for music, and idolizes singers such as Beyonce, Ariana Grande, Nicki Minaj, and Adele. He enjoys singing in his free time and finds it to be therapeutic.

"I think it is so important for students not to lose themselves this time of year. School is important, but so is mental health," said Furtado.

“

I make consistent study plans for my classes and I have a reward system after the fact.

- Jayviar Laporte
Second year student at NECC

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It is no secret that it is easy for students to lose themselves in their homework and class load, and for students like Furtado, hobbies and passions become a crucial part of their routine in order to stay refreshed, focused, and motivated in their studies and daily life.

Similarly, Nicole Sabando, 19, second year student at NECC, stated "I like to journal. I spend so much time staring at a computer that my eyes hurt. And it's nice to unwind and write down random thoughts, feelings, or whatever is on my mind. I think students forget about a

simple pen and piece of paper." While most, if not all, classwork is now digital or computerized, Sabando finds solace in her journal.

While blue light can be harmful to the human eye, it is not a bad idea to relieve some of that strain occasionally.

"I forget to correct my posture, too. You know, we stress mental health a great deal in college, and I appreciate that, but let's not forget about the aches and pains of staring at a computer screen," Sabando added.

Yes, yet another thing to add to the list of things col-

lege students are doing this time of year—slouching in front of the screen!

Sabando utilizes her journal to decompress from classwork and relieve some of the physical effects as well. Whether it be singing or journaling, these students stress prioritizing mental health during this time in the semester.

"I make consistent study plans for my classes, and I have a reward system after the fact," said Jayviar Laporte, 19, second year student at NECC.

Laporte brings a unique idea to the table — a reward

system.

Laporte explained "I make a check list of each assignment or topic I need to work through for the day, and once it's done, I do something nice for myself, like get my favorite coffee from Starbucks, or get something good to eat. It motivates me and makes me excited to finish my homework."

If students have not considered this before, it may be a good system to work with. All that matters is that students are healthy (mentally and physically) and satisfying the criteria to have a successful end of semester.

News

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Professor reflects on challenges of online classes

Teachers and students have faced obstacles in new environment

ALEX MAHONEY

Features editor

Having classes totally online has been very difficult for many students at NECC, but for teachers, it has also had a significant effect.

There have been many obstacles that professors have had to face during this pandemic.

As David Rattigan, a professor at NECC puts it, "An important distinction to make

is that we're not just teaching online, but teaching online during the COVID-19 era. Many of the professors and students are new to online learning and still trying to get the hang of it. Some just aren't suited to it."

Rattigan cited two things as being the most challenging for teaching in this environment.

He states that the first challenge is "determining how much work to give students, and how much is overload. I

want to challenge them intellectually without overwhelming them."

This basically is saying that without the ability to interact with students in person, it is hard to gauge the level of work that he should give.

The second challenge that he cited is in the same vein. He says, "the second is connecting with students. In a live classroom, a teacher can read faces and pick things up in conversation that tells

them a student is struggling, or students are getting bored because you're belaboring a subject. That's not the case online. Student participation in assignments and discussion boards can be a good indicator of student interest, but I prefer the face-to-face experience."

Despite these challenges, teachers are attempting to adapt to these extremely difficult circumstances.

Rattigan states that many students are actually thriving

in an online setting and that he is still trying to work on ways to teach better in this environment.

This upcoming spring semester, many more classes at NECC will be in person.

When asked how he felt about this, Rattigan said, "I look forward to it. I also teach at UMass Lowell, where we've been live for the fall semester, and I'm looking forward to teaching face-to-face at both schools in the spring."

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Labor shortage affecting workers

Staffing problems lead to more work for employees

NATHAN CANTELLI

Correspondent

The ongoing labor shortage has been making life for those who are employed at understaffed businesses more difficult.

Less employees often mean more work expected of each individual and less time for important things like training and breaks.

This all results in overworked workers who are more likely to quit and less satisfied customers.

The labor shortage continues.

Many businesses in the restaurant industry and other industries still have help

wanted signs on their doors.

While the shortage has caused lines to be longer and store hours to be shorter, the main victims of this problem are the workers who are forced to deal with working terribly understaffed jobs.

These workers must work longer hours and deal with impatient customers.

"It makes the day very stressful sometimes, and has the managers and certain crew members (me and like one other) working overtime" says Kyle Deabay, a manager at a Dunkin's in Haverhill, "When we are short staffed in the mornings, it leads to angry customers and we can't

get orders out as fast which is a major part of drive through operation."

Employee shortages at restaurants can cause frustration, but shortages in other types of places can have much worse effects.

Pharmacies have also been facing shortages.

Shortages at pharmacies can lead to people getting their medicine later than they should, or sacrifices made to cover missing shifts like training being postponed or shortened.

Both situations can potentially cause harm to customers that depend on the medicine.

"Prescriptions are con-

stantly being filled late while the patient waits in the store for it to be done," says Savanna Masters, a pharmacy technician.

"I've been working there for months and still haven't been able to finish my training modules (which are 40+ days late) because they always need me to be working on the floor instead of at the desk."

While some place the blame on the current generation being lazy, it seems that poor conditions that have only been made worse by the shortage are responsible for people not wanting to hold low paying jobs that overwork them.

Long hours and wages that couldn't pay rent alone cause high turnover rates.

"Business is still as it was with small changes in the schedule because (employees) have moved on or quit in the last two weeks," says James Vick, a Dunkin's employee from Haverhill, "

(It is) kinda sad cause they were good employees but its Dunks so people do come and go often."

While the labor shortage doesn't seem to be slowing down, higher wages and better workplaces for the workers may help fill some of those empty positions.

Students share opinions on Rittenhouse verdict

EVTHOKIA DIMAKIS

Correspondent

Kyle Rittenhouse, 18, was found not guilty Friday Nov. 19, for the murder of two women and wounding of a third involved in the protests that occurred last summer.

Both public outrage and public support followed the jury's decision, landing Rittenhouse's case a spot in every headline.

Today, students at Northern Essex Community College give their thoughts regarding the verdict.

It has become clear that those who disagree with the verdict find it controversial to the many other cases involving gun violence, such as Tamir Rice, and regard this as a result of white privilege in America.

Those who agree with the verdict find that Rittenhouse was done right by the justice system in an act of self-defense.

Aaliyah Colon, 20, second-year student at NECC said "I was disappointed, but not surprised. No matter how aggressive other protesters were, murder is wrong. I only wonder what the verdict would have been if Kyle Rittenhouse was not white."

Colon brings up a valid point, tipping her hat to the inequalities minorities face in the justice stem. Colon then added "If you look at cases like Breonna Taylor's, it really makes you think. She was killed by police for no reason. And nothing ever happened to those cops. Yet, Rittenhouse kills people and doesn't get so much as a slap on the wrist."

Students such as Colon stress the idea that a person of color in Rittenhouse's place would not stand a chance in court, and the reason for the verdict of not guilty comes down to white privilege.

However, another second-year student at NECC, Joshua, 19 who asked that his last name not be used, said "I agree that the justice system is corrupt in many ways, but I think that this time, the system did Rittenhouse right. The men he killed had previous criminal records, and the CCTV footage shows that Kyle was being attacked relentlessly. I don't believe murder is ever justifiable, but I do think he only shot them in self-defense."

Joshua makes note of the opposing view of the verdict — that it was self-defense. Still, though, Joshua and Colon agree that the justice system has much work to do. This raises the question of how.

Finally, second-year student, Nicole Sabando, 20, said "If (Rittenhouse) hadn't been at the protest, those people would not have been killed. He would not have had to 'defend' himself if he did not go. Therefore, I think he should have been charged. Why would he have brought his gun if he did not plan to use it? Who walks around with an AR-style semi-automatic rifle just for self-defense?"

Sabando asked important questions regarding this case that many people are already asking.

There are many unanswered questions regarding the verdict which creates its controversial nature, with many differing opinions on both sides of the spectrum.

However, it is important to hear from future generations of people and learn their perspectives on question-raising issues such as the case of Kyle Rittenhouse.

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What has NECC been watching? Fall 2021 Edition

By SHAUN HOOD

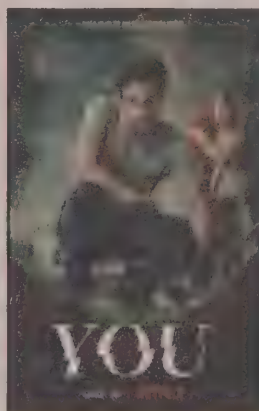
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Throughout the pandemic, and in general, movies and TV have always been very important to me in an artistic manner. Thus, I'm always interested in knowing what other people have been watching. This is the Fall 2021 edition of "What Has NECC Been Watching?"

Kim Lyng, the Liberal Arts Program Coordinator at NECC, enjoys watching "Ted Lasso," a series on Apple TV+. She likes the aspect of how all of the characters are very different, but they still work well with and listen to each other. "I think the show came along when we all needed a reminder of this, that kindness can go

a long way to understanding," says Lyng. Personally, I have heard great things about "Ted Lasso," and I love her take on the series, as I think that now in our country more than ever, it's important for all of us to push aside differences, and try to alleviate how divided we all can be at times. Lyng has worked in TV news in the past, and she also recently watched "The Morning Show," also on Apple TV+. "The Morning Show" follows a fictional TV news outlet, and all of the drama that occurs behind the scenes. "...Some of the show rang true, but on a much more dramatic scale!" says Lyng

Isa Grullon, Editor-in-Chief here at The Observer, recently



Courtesy of Netflix
Poster for "You" Season 3

watched "You," on Netflix. "I think when a show like this that has a very specific plot, it can get old really quickly, but I think this third season was really well done. It stayed true to the original, but still felt fresh

to the audience."

As for myself, I love Lady Gaga. I recently saw the movie, "House of Gucci," in theater. I think her performance was awesome in the movie. Check out my full review of "House of Gucci" at Fandomize Media (fandomize.com). I watched the "One Last Time" concert featuring Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett. "One Last Time" was a concert that they performed at in August, and it was filmed for a TV special, which aired on Sunday night. It was such an emotional and moving last hurrah for Bennett, and of course, they both killed it as always! "One Last Time" is now available to stream on Paramount+.

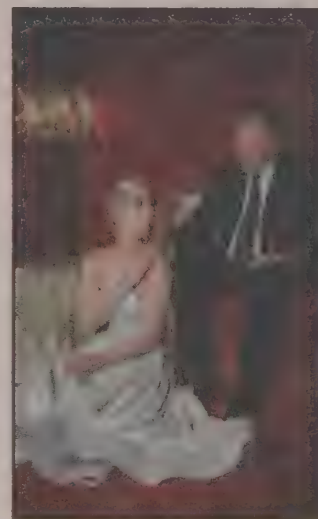


Photo: Kelsey Bennett/Courtesy of Interscope Records, Copyright 2021 CBS Broadcasting Inc. All Rights Reserved
Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett

"The Last Duel" Review

By LEO WELLOCK

Correspondent

"The Last Duel" is the latest film directed by Ridley Scott and sees him return to the sword-and-sandals epic with grand spectacle, action, and drama, but the majority of that primarily serves a backdrop for the film's scathing social commentary on patriarchal rule, religious influence, and most notably, sexism.

Based on a true story, the film takes place in 1386 France and focuses on the last legally authorized duel in the country's history between Jean de Carrouges and Jacques Le Gris, played by Matt Damon and Adam Driver respectively, after de Carrouges' wife Marguerite, played by Jodie Comer, accuses Le Gris of raping her.

What's unique about the film, outside of its timely themes, is the plot's structure. Taking a page out of films like "Rashomon" or "Pulp Fiction", The story is told through multiple viewpoints, with each act (or chapter, as the film calls them) differing

depending on the perspective. Chapter one depicts Damon's perspective of events from him being a warrior seeking honor but then becomes waylaid when Comer tells him what happened to her. Chapter two shifts to Driver, a squire and friend of Damon, as now, the events we saw from the latter's point of view weren't exactly portrayed how the former remembers. In addition to that, we also see Driver winning the favor of Count Pierre d'Alençon, played by Ben Affleck, to even witnessing his viewpoint on the horrific instigating incident that causes the duel. Finally, we view chapter three in which we see Comer's side of the story, and in turn the actual truth. The film utilizes this narrative technique brilliantly.

Scott once again directs with striking craftsmanship, not only with the more intimate dramatic scenes, but the action sequences are also nothing short of spectacular, complete with practical swordplay, wonderful setpieces and

sound mixing, and intense violence. Another thing to mention is this is the first time both Damon and Affleck have written a screenplay together since their Oscar win for "Good Will Hunting", and they along with Nicole Holofcener deliver a very well-written, and as previously mentioned layered script. The performances are also incredible, with Comer being a standout, particularly in the third chapter, and will most likely be a strong contender for awards night. Damon and Driver are also great as usual, both shifting from generally likable to malicious both as the film progresses and depending on the point of view. Affleck is surprisingly funny in the film as well, and I liked how his character is cocky, yet never to the point of essentially being a caricature of a real person.

Unfortunately, there's one thing I want to point out, but it's not about the film itself. Instead, I want to point out that sadly not many are seeing this film as it's still in

theaters. For me, it sounds surprising as the film has all the right components. You have an amazing director, a talented cast including a duo who are both respected actors and writers, gritty yet lavish period spectacle, and more-than-timely themes. Some have suggested poor marketing, which can potentially be attributed to the film's understandably sensitive subject matter, while others suggest its older target demographic are still not fully ready to return to theaters. One thing that was particularly polarizing was that when the film was announced, people were skeptical of what type of film it would be, with some fearing that it would be a glorified tale of two men dueling over a woman and the fact that this story which contains sexual assault of that woman was written and directed by men. That couldn't be further from the truth as One, Scott is no stranger to weaving feminist/anti-toxic masculinity themes into his work. Two, Both Damon and Affleck brought in Holofcener

to help give the story a more authentic female perspective, and Three, the titular climax, while exciting, also does not manipulate the viewer as we the audience see that these two men are basically battling for their own pride, something Comer verbally points to Damon as well. Speaking of whom, we see her view this fight appropriately disturbed, as not only is she worried for Damon's safety, not only is she horrified as to how far this went and how everyone else views this event as grand. The film essentially denounces what it's advertising.

In conclusion, "The Last Duel" is a film that, despite the potentially off-putting subject matter, I encourage everyone to see and support. It's well-acted, well-directed, superbly written and greatly paced, immersing the viewer, not realizing two and a half hours have passed.

Arts & Entertainment

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Yoga studio in downtown Haverhill to host class with live music

By SHAUN HOOD

Arts & Entertainment Editor

One amazing spot located in Downtown on Washington Street, is The Yoga Tree. This beautiful yoga studio offers various yoga classes every day throughout the week, as well as lots of yoga-related special events. On Dec. 12, Yoga Tree owner Ally Vallieres will teach a yoga class as local singer-songwriter Liz Bills performs live in the studio. Liz Bills is a full-time musical performer, and recently released an album, *Liz Bills & the Change*, which can be streamed wherever you listen to music. The yoga class that Ally is teaching during Liz's performance is happening Sunday night, Dec. 12, at 5 p.m., more details can be found at www.yogatreestudio.com.

The NECC Observer recently had the chance to chat with both Ally and Liz discussing their upcoming collaboration as well as The Yoga Tree in general and Liz's music. Check out the interview below!

Shaun Hood: I know that The Yoga Tree has been holding lots of special events recently, and I can see that there are many more to come. What is it specifically that you cherish about these classes with live music that makes this coming Friday night so special?

Ally Vallieres: Special events are an opportunity to have fun, unwind, and gather together with community in a different way from what we're

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The pandemic is nowhere near over and we're still dealing with those challenges, but I'm excited to see what the future holds for The Yoga Tree

- Ally Vallieres, Owner of The Yoga Tree

”

accustomed to. It's different from meeting friends out at a restaurant or bar; in the studio, you feel seen, supported and loved. You feel like you're part of something greater.

SH: Is there anything in particular that you like about Liz's talent that you think makes her such a great fit for this event?

AV: First of all, she's an incredible vocal talent. More importantly, Liz has this sort of magical presence both on stage and on her yoga mat. She's a dedicated yogi and can really read the energy of a room, which is such an asset to a live music yoga class. We're able to combine our talents to guide students through a beautiful physical and spiritual adventure.

SH: How is The Yoga Tree doing in terms of class attendance and/or the business aspect of things right now considering the current state of the pandemic?

AV: Our community is incredible. We've been really lucky in that our studio is spacious so even though we're still spacing and limiting the amount of people we register for each class, we're still able to provide a consistent yoga practice for so many Merrimack Valley yogis. The pandemic is nowhere near over

and we're still navigating the challenges that come with that but I'm excited for what the future holds for The Yoga Tree.

SH: Is there anything else happening or coming up at The Yoga Tree that you'd like our readers to know about?

AV: We've got a lot going on! Aside from our weekly class schedule, we host a variety of special events each month. We're hosting a Reiki Level I training in October and a 200 hour teacher training that will begin in the Winter of 2022. Additionally, you'll see a few retreat opportunities for 2022. Visit us at www.theyogatreestudio.com to check out all of our offerings!

SH: Tell us about the ideas behind, and the process of creating, your song, "Wi-Hi." Also, what do you have to say about the cultural relevance of that song, especially times like today when so much of our day-to-day lives involve screens?

Liz Bills: So I wrote the song actually before the pandemic, which is funny, but I wrote it to express my own issues with social media and cell phone addiction, which I think we all struggle with – whether we're aware of it or not – at some level. For me, the more that I'm on my cell

phone – which can be a problem for me – the less present I am with myself and my wants and my needs and my body. So I become more anxious, maybe more depressed, more over-stimulated.

It's also this idea that, as human beings, we weren't designed to take in so much information. So for me, it's that my nervous system is often in a state of fight or flight because of just too much information. So that's why I wrote the song. I would say right now, it's a great time in our culture, in 2021, to be talking about this. I'm not anti social media or anti cell phone or anything like that. I just really believe that it's a great conversation to have about having boundaries around social media and cell phone. Perhaps, in the morning when you wake up, you don't have to go on your cell phone right away and check all your emails. Or at night, you can decide, "Oh, I'm going to put the cell phone away at 9:00 PM and read." So it's just little things like that, that we can talk about as a culture and a community to make sure that we feel present and happy.

SH: Is there anything that you like in particular about singing at The Yoga Tree? Does it feel different when your audience is mov-

ing through a yoga practice throughout your performance?

LB: Yeah, it is different. I'm known for being a very high energy performer and we play a lot of festivals where I'm jumping and screaming and dancing. So when I'm playing at a yoga class, it just gives me the space to really relax and to sing softer, which is nice. I would say it's just slower, more relaxing, softer, a vulnerable side of myself that I can share in the yoga studio.

SH: Is there anything that you're currently working on or that you have coming up that you'd like our readers to know about?

LB: Well, I just released a new record in August. So right now, we're playing all those songs and it's available on all major streaming platforms, and the band right now is just working on a theatrical set that we will be able to show everyone this coming festival season. So in the spring and summer, we'll have a full theatrical experience that you can, not just enjoy the music, but really enjoy a lot of visuals and theatrics. So we're excited to share that next year.

Liz Bills can be found on Instagram @lizbills, and The Yoga Tree can be found on Instagram @yogatreestudio.

“Diana” Review

By ALEXIS ENO

Correspondent

The production of *Diana* the musical came out on Netflix on Oct. 1, 2021; the creators of this show were Christopher Ashley, with choreography by Kelly Devine.

Back in February 2019, the show was only previewed in the La Jolla Playhouse, and

then in March, the exhibition was opened on the 3rd. But the production stopped when Covid-19 hit the world. The show was supported to be back in 2020, but again the pandemic delayed it. Luckily in the summer of 2020, the Broadway production had done a show with Covid safety protocols in place and no audience. I have always been

fascinated by Princess Diana's story. I watched many documentaries on her life in London with the royal family.

I also love musicals, so this was right in line with my interest, and I saw many people reviewing it. Everyone was hyping it up and saying it was terrific, so I had to see for myself. They were not wrong. The musical was beautiful,

and the casting was perfect; Jeanna de Waal, the actress, was absolutely an excellent Diana.

The music was enjoyable and would make anyone want to sing along as well as dance. The costumes were unbelievable and right on the dot of what the characters would wear during that time. I think this music does Diana's story

justice and shows the feelings from beginning to end. It never goes into disrespecting territory, and when it goes to very serious parts of her life, they always keep it passionate and rough.

I recommend everyone who loves musicals and learning about Diana or about the royal family to watch it. It's worth it.

Campus Life

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The PACE program

A pathway for pioneers

By ISA GRULLON
Editor-in-Chief

For many first-generation students, the college experience can be a difficult process to navigate. Pathways to Academic & Career Excellence, better known as PACE, is a Student Support Services program funded by a TRiO grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

At NECC, the PACE staff consists of Director Kristen Arnold, Data Specialist Christine Carbone, Academic Adviser Sheila Corsaro, and Transfer Adviser Jessica Rocker.

PACE serves both NECC campuses.

The Haverhill office is in the Behrakis Student Center, room SC213 and the Lawrence office is in the Dimitry Building, room L101.

Lyric Iraola, 18, of Lawrence is a childhood development major and a first-generation college student. She heard about PACE from a family member.

"They are there to help. I want to continue college after my two years here, so they're

going to help me go to UMass Amherst or Lowell, wherever," says Iraola.

The pandemic has made it difficult to bring new students into the program over the past year.

"It's hard to appeal to students when you aren't in person. They couldn't see us present on campus. They think it's like a gimmick sometimes," says Rocker. "We're hoping this year is a little bit better," she adds.

As the event and field trip coordinator, Rocker had to get creative in order to continue providing fun things to keep students engaged.

"Everything went virtual. For me it was really hard because I had to figure out a way to connect with students and still do the same things but do it virtually."

Some of the virtual events provided by PACE have included a cooking class, paint nights and even a ghost tour.

Rocker thinks they will continue to include virtual events in the rotation of activ-

ities moving forward.

Kimberly Garcia, 18, of Lawrence, studies art and design at NECC. She learned about PACE when Rocker contacted her about joining the program.

"I like how they do events, like the art event, we did it through Zoom, it was awesome," says Garcia.

"I feel like they're helping me be more out there," she added.

Garcia plans on transferring to a four-year school and ultimately finding an art and design job.

"On our most recent Annual Performance Report 89% of our students persisted, 95% of our students were in good academic standing, 87% of our students graduated with an associate degree or certificate within 8 semesters of entering PACE and 64% of our students earned an associates degree or certificate AND transferred to a four-year college within 8 semesters of joining PACE," Arnold shared in an email.

PACE also hosts field trips

to various colleges and universities in the area including Merrimack College, Salem State University, UMass Lowell and more.

For more information on PACE and to see if you are eligible to join the program call 978-556-3403 or email kar-nold@necc.mass.edu.

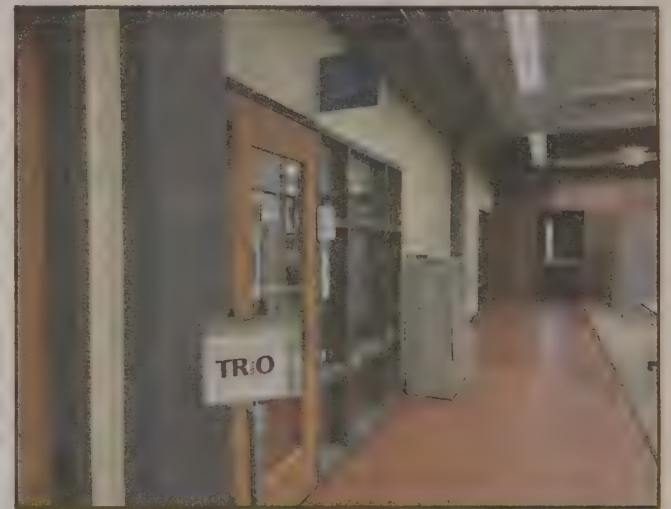


Photo by Isa Grullon

The PACE office entrance at the Behrakis Student Center in Haverhill.



Photo by Isa Grullon

Seating area in the Haverhill PACE office where students can find various items from high lighters to candy hanging on their holiday tree all year round.



Photo by Isa Grullon

The PACE "Wall of Fame" where student success stories are displayed.



Photo by Isa Grullon

Signatures from past PACE graduates.



Photo by Isa Grullon

PACE promotes a welcoming atmosphere.

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A look into NECC's Environmental Club

Members are passionate about caring for the environment

By KASEY GORDON

Correspondent

Since 2019 NECC's Environmental Club has been hosting meetings and events for those who are passionate about protecting and preserving our beloved Mother Earth.

If this is something you are interested in, the club is always recruiting new members.

"Our overall goal is to increase public awareness of environmental issues facing our communities today by getting individuals involved," says club adviser Mark Reinhold.

"We try to do this by holding events at the college in order to provide opportunities for students to make an impact in their own communities.

"Ideally, by being involved at the local level, we hope students will be inspired to make an impact at the broader state, national or even global level."

In an interview with NECC's Environmental Club's President, Emma Attwood, she says "the ultimate goal of the environmental club is for people who are passionate about keeping the Earth clean to come together and make a difference as well as growing our club and getting new members."

In April the Environmental Club connected with the community and paired up with various other campus clubs, such as the art club who created pieces from recycled items, to host an Earth Awareness Day.

Reinhold says "We had about a dozen students participate and we will be looking to repeat the effort this coming April."

Earlier in the year the club hosted two on-campus



Photo courtesy skitterphoto, pexels.com

The Environmental Club offers "an outlet for students who are passionate about caring for the environment to share their ideas and actively help the environment alongside others who share their beliefs," according to the NECC website.

cleanups at both the Haverhill and Lawrence campuses.

This semester the club also held their first ever off-campus cleanup at Plugs Pond in Haverhill.

When asked about any new developments to report, presi-

dent of the club, Attwood, states "in the spring semester we do hope to be able to do a trash cleanup at one of the beaches."

"If you would like to make an impact in the local community, come and see us next spring," Reinhold adds.

"Every little thing we do does have a global impact; collecting plastic and other trash prevents it from entering the watershed and posing a risk to wildlife, cleaning up leaves helps prevent eutrophication which is the over-

growth of bacteria which can lead to a reduction in oxygen levels of local water bodies."

For more information about the club, visit the Student Activities section of the NECC website.

Features

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Cara Forcino, a helpful individual

Administrative assistant has accomplished many tasks at NECC

By OWEN DELVIN

Correspondent

North Andover resident Cara Forcino has always found herself in a position of helping others throughout her career. Whether she is fitting individuals with a pair of glasses, or helping them implement accommodations and schedule appointments, she is passionate about doing her part to help them succeed.

Forcino, a native of Groton, Mass., studied opticianry at Worcester Industrial Technical Institute (WITI) for two years after high school. After graduating from Worcester Tech, Forcino worked as a registered optician for eleven years. During part of this time, she ran an optical shop in Ipswich, Mass. for an independent optometrist.

Many years later, Forcino went back to school to change careers. She started out study-

ing computer applications at the Computer Learning Center (CLC), and later studied business at Anna Maria College.

After finishing school, Forcino was hired by the Computer Learning Center (CLC), to serve as their admissions representative. After leaving this role, Forcino found work at the Protestant Guild for Human Services.

Initially, she started out as a receptionist, but later became their student record coordinator.

Forcino was later hired by Northern Essex Community College in 1999. Initially, she worked in the Student Health Center as a full-time clerk, but later became their administrative assistant.

During her time in the Student Health Center, Forcino had the opportunity to get to know the staff in the Center for Accessibility Resources and Services (CARS) because

it was located right across the hall from where she was working at the time.

After the health center closed, Forcino found work as a full-time administrative assistant in the Center for Accessibility Resources and Services (CARS).

As administrative assistant, Forcino is responsible for handling a number of managerial tasks that relate to the day-to-day operations in the Center for Accessibility Resources and Services (CARS). Some of these daily tasks include answering phone calls, greeting guests, maintaining Outlook calendars for staff members, maintaining student files, sending e-mails to students with reminders throughout the semester and assisting students in various ways. For example, connecting them with their disability service specialist.

Additionally, Forcino is

responsible for providing assistance to staff members who work in the various support programs and services that operate out of the center, including the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative (MAICEI) program, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS).

There are many aspects that Forcino enjoys about her position, especially having the opportunity to interact with students and parents. "I am most often the first person students or parents see or hear when they contact CARS and they are quite often nervous about what to expect and how it all works. I like that I can provide information to them in a way that alleviates some of that trepidation and then once they are established with our office they know that they will be greeted by a familiar voice or face whenever they need us," Forcino said. "I en-

joy helping others because it gives me a sense of purpose."

Forcino highlights a few memorable experiences throughout her 22 years working at Northern Essex Community College. She states: "When I completed the Leadership Academy through the Center for Professional Development I was pretty proud of myself and my involvement in the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) when we had a chapter at NECC was very special to me as well."

Outside of work, Forcino has many hobbies and interests. She enjoys attending outdoor blues festivals, kayaking, spending time with her 1-year-old grandson and taking care of her 90-year-old mother.

She also enjoys being involved in the Unitarian Universalist church that she has belonged to for 28 years.

Kelly Sanborn, a key figure for NECC students

Staff member explains why she loves working at NECC

By OWEN DELVIN

Correspondent

Throughout her career, Kelly Sanborn has held a number of different positions – from working at Building 19, to working at the deli counter in Market Basket, to eventually landing in her current position as administrative assistant at Northern Essex Community College. Although each position may seem very different from one another, they are connected through their human service component, which is something that Sanborn cares about.

Sanborn, a longtime Haverhill, Mass. resident, is a graduate of Haverhill High School. After graduating high school, Sanborn went on to attend college at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston for two years, and majored in illustration.

From there, Sanborn attended Northern Essex Community College, and graduated with an Associate's degree with a focus in biology.

While studying at Northern Essex, Sanborn would frequently see signs outside the accommodations center because they were seeking more student notetakers to join their team, something that Sanborn was interested in. After signing up, Sanborn started working with a man who was legally blind.

Following the departure of an administrative assistant, as well as the office director, Sanborn became more involved in the day-to-day operations in the office by helping out with various administrative tasks. Sanborn would answer phone calls, schedule note-taking sessions and put different packages together.

After a job posting was made available for the posi-

tion on the college website, Sanborn applied for it, and ultimately ended up getting the job. As the third administrative assistant in the Center for Accessibility Resources and Services (CARS), Sanborn is responsible for a number of administrative duties, such as helping students implement accommodations, and helping them get started. In addition, Sanborn still works as a notetaker for students, too.

There are many things that Sanborn likes about her current position. "I love the good feeling that you get when you are helping people. It's also a good feeling knowing you are helping students improve their life in some way," said Sanborn. "Sometimes students are very apprehensive about coming to college, but it's very satisfying to see their progression. I've seen students who have had to start out in basic math and English

developmental classes, but later graduate with a degree in engineering, for example. Many students make huge strides while they are here."

Prior to her role at Northern Essex, Sanborn worked at Building 19 for a few years, which was located in Malden, Mass. She also worked at a few small shops in downtown Haverhill. Plus, she spent a few years at Market Basket working at the deli counter.

Sanborn has experienced many career highlights in her time at Northern Essex. "There were a couple of students that I worked with for a long time, both in the office and in the classroom. I worked with one woman who was on the Autism Spectrum. She was in her 20's when she started, and later graduated with a degree in her 40's. It took her a long time to finish because she was taking one or two courses each semes-

ter," said Sanborn. "At the time, I was working with her in a Human Services course. On the last day of the class, she started to cry because she had bonded with the other students, something that was difficult for her because she was on the Autism Spectrum. She connected with the other students through Facebook so they could keep in touch. I attended her graduation ceremony, and saw her receive her diploma."

Sanborn also had the opportunity to travel back to London for eight days with other college faculty members a few years ago. She had previously visited the city for three months as a student through the college's study abroad program.

Outside of work, Sanborn enjoys reading, drawing, painting, cooking, baking and spending time with her dog.

Features

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Sharon Polleck, an inspiring scientist

Local woman explains her impressive career in science

By LUKE LARKHAM
Correspondent

Sharon Polleck is a mother, a mentor, and has been a lead researcher and lab scientist at Pfizer biopharmaceuticals in Andover for the past twelve years.

Polleck was one of the many researchers who worked on the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19, one of the vaccines that will meet the requirements for Northern Essex's return to campus this upcoming spring.

Polleck is a mother to four children and lives with her long-term partner Phil Boyle, a senior research scientist at Pfizer. She began the journey that led her to her current career as a research scientist back in 1991.

"I first started school at Colorado State University in a pre Med program in 1991. In 1993, I transferred to Merrimack College where I completed my degree in both biology and chemistry and did research in molecular biology. I graduated from that in 1996," said Polleck.

Polleck had two children while an undergrad in Colorado and continued with her degree. However, during this time, one of her children became severely ill, and so she had to leave the pre-med program and move back to her hometown in Tewksbury, Massachusetts.

Seeing my mom's drive to build a career she's passionate about has definitely been a source of inspiration to me

- Lillian Zagorites

In Tewksbury, she was able to go back to school with her parents able to watch her son and infant daughter.

"She wouldn't be where she is today without my grandparents," said her daughter, Lillian Zagorites, "when Michaela got sick, she wouldn't have been able to go back to school without them to watch her, wouldn't have been able to figure out what she wanted to do with her life. She's an intelligent, determined woman, but everyone needs help sometimes, and she was lucky enough to have their love and support."

Returning to school was still difficult for Polleck. However, as a single mother, she knew even with the help of her parent's there were many barriers to cross.

"I asked her what she liked doing best in her classes, and she said the days she got to take classes in the lab were always her favorite," said Polleck's father, Albert Polleck, "So I told her life is too short not to do what makes you happiest, and if that makes her

happy, she should be in a lab."

So, Polleck pursued a bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry at Merrimack College. While still a student there landed a lab scientist position at Dow Chemical, where her education continued.

"I decided to work at a chemical company for a year or so, which ended up being five years. While at Dow Chemical I took master classes for organic chemistry at Northeastern. Although I didn't get to finish it because I had gotten remarried and had two more children, so four children. It's a lot," said Polleck.

Polleck started at Dow Chemical as an analytical chemist, and while her work changed as she continued her job there, the work largely remained in analysis.

Polleck's preferred science, however, is genetics. "I love genetics. I've always loved genetics and that's exactly what I decided I wanted to do. But then I had an unfortunate thing happen where I became

severely allergic to the antibiotics in the microbiology lab where we were doing that so I couldn't fulfill that goal. Then I had to take the first job I could," said Polleck.

After leaving Dow, she got married for a second time, had two more children, and has continued to rise through the ranks at Pfizer, where she is now a research scientist, team lead, and an influential booster of morale, according to Polleck herself.

In recent years, she has even continued her education, attending classes to receive her master's degree in genetics in 2019, which she expects to finish this spring.

"I now find my career more satisfying than ever because not only do I work as a scientist, I also mentor people. I lead the CRG, a colleague resource group, and a woman's leadership group. I find a lot of satisfaction in their learning and helping people become better leaders at a much younger age. I strongly believe that to have good leaders, you have to start when

they're young and the juniors at the companies, not when they're already leaders," said Polleck.

After thirty years of building a career and a family, Polleck has been an inspiration to many, her children especially.

"Seeing my mom's drive to build a career she's passionate about has definitely been a source of inspiration for me," said Zagorites, "her vision has really helped shape the way I view my future career."

To anyone who is struggling to find a career they're passionate about, Sharon Polleck has this to say:

"The thing I would say is to try and take as many things that you think you'll like, and have some type of criteria to know if it makes you happy or not, then just kinda go with it," said Polleck.

"I don't think everyone knows what they want to do or what they want to be when they graduate high school. Even today, if I were to leave this job, I could see myself doing many other things."

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Knights Basketball wins home opener

By JOSE RODRIGUEZ
Sports Editor

On Wednesday, Nov. 3, the NECC Knights men's basketball team had their home opener against UMaine-Augusta. The players were practicing their shot before the game. I was there a hour early before tip off and both teams were already practicing.

Even though this was their first game of the season it was big they were trying to do something that the 2017-2018 men's basketball team accomplished, that was winning a game on opening night. Before the game I talked with the head coach, Darren Stratton and he told me that it was going to be a test. "With UMaine-Augusta they're one of the top teams out of their conference, which they are a four-year school where they have juniors, seniors that been playing together for a long time where we have a lot of freshmen so I think it is a good test..." Stratton said.

The first game of the season really shows where this team is at and how the Knights perform in the first game of the season is going to determinaine how well they work together compared against other teams. He also mentioned "I expect

a lot of nerve. I think I have a lot of kids playing their first game, first collegiate game... we have to fight through but as the game goes on I expect us to perform well tonight."

They had a big crowd watching and 115 people were in attendance. NECC Athletic Director Dan Blair announced the starting lineup for both teams and then the national anthem. In the first period the Knights started the game strong. They began the game with a 12-0 run. They were leading 42-15 at the half.

I had a chance to talk with Coach Stratton after the game.

"I think we played and we feed off our emotions and it carry us in our defense intensity the first half. I feel that we had a lot of mistakes we made for it with our energy..." Stratton said.

Although the Knights had that big lead in the first period, they also had seven fouls against UMaine-Augusta. In the second period, which was the last period of the game they started slow and UMaine-Augusta was taking advantages of the opportunities that the Knights didn't capitalize.

They outscored the Knights 51-36 in the second half. They

had a different game plan in the second half to control the Knights. At one point in the game, it seems like UMaine-Augusta was going to take over the lead, but the Knights never gave up the lead thanks to 12-0 run to begin the first period they had the lead for the entire game. In the entire game overall, they had 17 fouls -- seven in the first period and 10 in the second half. Some of the fouls that happened in the second period should not have happened.

They got sloppy and got lazy in the beginning of the period but as the second half progressed they got a little bit better. They also had 27 turnovers. They need to improve on the turnovers because if they don't and they lose by a close game that's going to be the reason why. It was just the first game of the season but as the season continues, I expect them to get better on the turnover and be a little more aggressive as they were in the first period.

According to neccknights.com, Philip Cunningham of Haverhill who played 28 minutes during the game he had 15 points, 11 rebounds, 2 steal and 4 assist to begin the 2021-2022 campaign.



Photo by Bryan Thomas

Sports Editor Jose Rodriguez, interviewing NECC basketball head coach Darren Stratton.

"It felt pretty good after COVID. I know a lot of people were struggling I know we had a lot of time in the gym, so we put on the work and we had good result," Cunningham said.

Allowing fans back in the arena it gives fan excitement to cheer on their team and on top of that it helps fans to forget the hard time that happen with the virus as little by little everything is going to go back to normality.

"This is a big win this is a young team I'm probably youngest so it's probably a big win for my first college game," he said.

Most players on the team are newcomers so this season there are a lot of new faces for the Knights Basketball team.

They are expected to perform well and every time they are in the court they are expected to win. Cunningham was the star of the game leading on points, rebound and assist during the game.

According to neccknights.com, Metin Yavuz of Istanbul, Turkey, who played 19 minutes to begin the 2021-2022 campaign with 14 points, 6 rebounds, 3 steals and 0 assist. I asked him about the second half "In the second half we couldn't came up like what we wanted to as a team we could've done a better a job and that was the important thing..." Yavuz mentioned.

Even though the second half wasn't productive like they wanted, it was enough to get the win.

Men's Basketball Schedule

December

Thu. 2 Quincy College *^ at Quincy College	7 p.m.
Sat. 4 Community College of Rhode Island *^	12 p.m.
Thu. 9 Massasoit Community College *^	6 p.m.
Sat 11. at Holyoke Community College *^	TBA

January

Tue. 11 Springfield Technical Community College *^	6 p.m.
Sat. 15 at MassBay Community College *^	1 p.m.
Thu. 20 Eastern Nazarene JV	6 p.m.
Sat. 22 At Bunker Hill Community College *^	2 p.m.
Thur. 27 University of Conneticut at Avery Point *^	6 p.m.
Sat. 29 Bristol Community College *^	12 p.m.

February

Tue. 1 at Community College of Rhode Island *^	7 p.m.
Thur. 3 Roxbury Community College *^	6 p.m.
Sat. 5 at Gateway Community College -CT *^	1 p.m.
Thur. 10 at Quinsigamond Community College *^	7 p.m.
Tue. 15 Holyoke Community College *^	6 p.m.
Thu. 17 at Massasiot Community College	7:30 p.m.
Sat. 19 Quincy College *^	12 p.m.

* Conference ^ Division

Sports

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Knights win first conference game

By JOSE RODRIGUEZ

Sports Editor

On Nov. 9 NECC Knights face off against Quinsigamond Community College in the Sports and Fitness Center.

This was the Knights first conference game of the season. A big crowd was in hand just like on opening night this time 121 people were in attendance.

This was the Knights first conference game of the year. NECC basketball head coach Darren Stratton mention to me "I think every conference game is important. With first conference game you want to go out, you obvious you want to grab it..." Stratton said. If the Knights wants to go far this season and have a chance for competing for a championship those are the team they need to beat.

They were 1-2 in the season entering tonight a chance to go back at .500.

The Knights begin the first period in total domination. They begin the first seven minutes of the first period with a 30-6 run.

The Knights also had 6 fouls in that first period while Quinsigamond had 8. They were leading 34-22 at the half.

The last 13 minutes in the period they did not play intense like they did they were outscored 16 to 4. One of the reasons is probably because Matt D'Amotto injury it took the team out of rhythm a little.

In the post-game interview coach Darren Stratton mentioned to me "I think is to early to determine but as you saw they put in a air cast right away so I think his injury it's going to be pretty significant for us moving forward... he is another key lost to key member of



Photo by Jose Rodriguez, Sports Editor

NECC Knights in action against Quinsigamond Community College on Nov. 9.

our rotation that we been using," Stratton said.

The second period the Knights had 7 fouls while Quinsigamond had 4. The Knights had less foul than they had in opening night.

The Knights would not win this game if it were not for the performance that Elijah Haas of Haverhill had. Haas scored 23 points in 20 minutes a career high in point. It was

enough to defeat Quinsigamond 85-57. The knights also had 41 rebounds and 20 assist during the game.

He mentioned to me "I think it was energy honestly the bench had it energy." The rhythm and the energy for Elijah and his teammates really brought their game. As the Knights was in control command and never blow a lead during the game.

The Knights really need someone to step up big and have that big enough lead to start the game so the team could go into rhythm and be positive that they could really win this.

I ask Matt Logue of Windham, N.H., how important was getting a win against a conference team.

"Really important we got to get as many division

wins as we can and try to win a division championship," said Logue.

Every team have that same mind and same mentality. The first goal is to win a division champion and the second goal is to win the championship one step out time.

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Injuries lead to tough loss for Knights

By JOSE RODRIGUEZ
SPORTS EDITOR

On Veterans Day, Thursday Nov. 11, the NECC Knights faced Southern Maine Community College. They didn't have a big crowd in attendance to watch the game at the Sports and Fitness Center.

Before the game I had a chance to talk with the head coach to give me an injury update. This team is currently dealing with several players who are injured early on in the season. "I want to say probably couple of weeks away Matt (D'Amato) comeback he has a high ankle sprain that he is receiving treatment for. Jaleek (Urena) he has a groin injury that has been hampering him right after the first game so we basically shut him down until November 20 and then we test him out. Matt will live in week by week I imagine his 2 to 3 weeks out... and we dealing a issue with Mehmet (Asik)... he has been battling with an illness..." Stratton said. The first half Southern Maine were leading 34-22 at the half.

Overall, the Knights did not have a good game at all and could not keep up the momentum from their last game. Overall, the Knights were shooting 18.8% from the three-point line and a 41.9% from the free throw line. They were outscored. Southern



Photo by Jose Rodriguez, Sports Editor

Knights in action against Southern Maine Community College on Veterans Day.

Maine was taking advantage of the chances that the Knights did not capitalize on and they made them pay for it.

The second half, that is when the game got out of hand, and they were no shot for the Knights to come back. Southern Maine outscored them 56-36 in the second half. It was

enough to defeat the Knights 90 to 54.

As a result, the Knights suffered their first loss of the season at home during the 2021-2022 season. During the post-game the assistant head coach was trying to get a few players for me and it didn't work out. The team was frus-

trated, and I understand why. They lost by 36 points on their home court. Immediately after Coach Stratton talked to his players in the locker room he went to his office and checked his email. None of the players wanted to talk to me.

The Knights will go on the road to play against Eastern

Nazarene JV on Nov. 17 at 7 PM and on Nov. 20 it will be the second division conference game of the season. They will host University of Connecticut at Avery Point. Game time is scheduled for 1:30 PM.

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Controversial call sends game to overtime Knights lose in double overtime

By JOSE RODRIGUEZ

Sports Editor

On Thursday, Nov. 23, at 6 p.m. Great Bay Community College visited NECC Knights for a home game at the Sports and Fitness Center at the Haverhill campus. The Knights were 4-3 coming into today's game with a two game winning streak.

It was the first and probably the last giveaway of the season. Twenty-five fans in attendance received mullet wigs in honor of Matt D'Amato's recent brush with viral fame. The video got viral on Instagram SportsCenter, with one commenter calling D'Amato the "The Mullet Mamba."

They were 197 people in attendance that's the most fans in attendance at home so far in the 2021-2022 season.

Before the game in the tunnel I talked to the coach before the game and I talked to him about the video that went viral on Instagram "I thought it was very interesting that I don't have social media so it was very intriguing to me. I am still trying to grasp all of this about the viral video about Matt and his haircut. It is funny that you mentioned that Matt asked me at the beginning of the year before our first game, he asked if I wanted him to cut his hair and I said absolutely not. As long as he keeps on the ball on the basket I don't care what he wore for a haircut," Stratton said.

Matt D'Amato and Jaleek Urena was in a minute restriction as they don't want to push them to much as they are progressing coming off from an injury little by little. Jaleek missed six games while Matt missed four games heading into the game against Great Bay.

Mehmet Asik was ready for the road trip as he was battling an illness. He played against Eastern Nazarene JV and University of Connecticut at Avery Point on the road trip. "Mehmet is just work-

ing his way back and still doesn't have his conditioning as you'll see tonight, we been trying to put him on a minute restriction, increasing his minutes game by game. I was forced last game against UConn Avery Point to play him a little bit longer just because we had six game out... so he was forced to play a little bit longer..." Stratton said.

During the game in the first period Knights started off strong. They were rhythm, everything was going in their favor as they started the game with 14-4 run. They were in the row throw line early on and they were making their shot.

Halfway in the first period Knights that's when the Knights were not starting to play as aggressive as they were in the beginning.

"I feel we got less discipline on defense we weren't executed as well on offense like we wanted to. We were rushing stuff but few adjustment I feel we going to work on it in practice tomorrow..." said Jasjit Banwait of Malton, Ontario.

Knights were leading 35-30 at the half despite almost blowing 14-4 lead to begin the game.

The momentum at the end of the first period carried on to the second period. They weren't aggressive "Is laziness playing simple was laziness we came out fouling reaching doing the things we not supposed to do and put our self in bad predicaments and it showed tonight," Stratton said.

That's one of the reason that cost the Knights the game and the referee's controversial call that blew the Knights there 3 straight win of the season. At the buzzer the referee called a foul on Mehmet Asik of Ankira, Turkey with the Knights up 66-64.

Ethan May of Great Bay Community College needed to make at least two of the

three free throw to guarantee an overtime and if they made all three in the Knights lost. He made the first two in then Coach Stratton called a time out with the game tied at 66 with one shot remaining. For May this would determine if the game went to overtime, or the Knights were going to lose and the game went to overtime as May missed the last free throw.

The game went to overtime tied at 66. It was a classic game at the Sports and Fitness Center but only one can become victories.

In overtime it is five minutes opposed to the regular 20 minutes for each period on the first and in the second period. Both teams scored 5 points which tied at 71 heading to the second overtime.

That's when Great Bay exploded in the second overtime. They outscored the Knights 12-1 and it was enough to defeat the Knights 83 to 72.

Coach Stratton post game commented on the controversial call to send the game to overtime at the end of the second period. "I think it was a controversial call but I am not going to blame an official because it was a judgement call. They get paid to do you know basically to rule judgement. I haven't look at the film I'm not going to blame the official because that was one position... so in a game there so many possessions, that game shouldn't come down to that call. Basically we should've won in many possessions during the game that it didn't get us to that point."

We also learned that Philip Cunningham of Haverhill didn't play tonight. He is out with an injury but he was on the bench without his uniform on and Christian Kinsley of Lawrence was sick and could not come to the arena to support his teammates.



Photo by Jose Rodriguez, Sports Editor

NECC Knights in a classic game against Great Bay Community College



Photo by Jose Rodriguez, Sports Editor

Coach Stratton motivating his player's during the final three minutes of the second period.

Sports

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Xavier Nunez named softball head coach

BY JOSE RODRIGUEZ

Sports Editor

Former NECC Baseball Player Xavier Nunez and the current assistant baseball coach under Jeff Mejia was named the softball head coach earlier this year for the upcoming season in 2022.

Nunez played baseball under coach Mejia from 2016 and 2017 before transferring to New England College in Henniker, N.H.

Nunez as a senior played in 46 games and batted .383.

He helped the team to earn their first ever conference championship in NECC history and advanced to NCAA Division three tournament where they won the New England Regional championship before losing in the Super Regional.

"For the past five years he

has worked with area softball players through Rams Athletic Complex Softball clings at the North Reading based facility. At the facility he has also conducted private instruction for both softball and baseball. He has two years of club coaching experience as well with both Team Boston and New Hampshire prospects," according to neccknights.com

Nunez said he thanks Mejia and Blair for this opportunity.

"I'm very proud. It is a happy moment definitely in my career," he said. "It's my first job coaching college sports. I have been helping Jeff (Mejia) coach the baseball team and I'm happy him and Dan (Blair) were confident in me enough to give me this job. I'm excited about it and moving the program forward," Nunez said.

Nunez believes he is fully prepared to coach. He also is learning more and thinking every day that it will help him to be a better coach than what he already is.

Coach Nunez also announced when tryouts can possibly be available for softball players who are interested in participating and trying to make the team.

"I will be holding tryouts probably early March to late February, you know depending on what we are looking for the number," he said.

Then how do you determine if a player fits well on the team?

"If you can help the team win games you are going to be in the team it's pretty straight forward... my favorite player is the one that wants to be there the most..."



Photo Courtesy neccknights.com

NECC Knights Softball head coach Xavier Nunez

Track and field coach looking to recruit for spring

BY JOSE RODRIGUEZ

Sports Editor

The NECC Knights Track and Field head coach is Nelson Desilvestre. He coaches both men's and women's.

He came to NECC in 2017. Before coming to Northern Essex he was the head coach of Winter track at Manchester-Essex Regional High School for four seasons.

According to neccknights.com "Prior to Manchester-Essex, Nelson was the Head Boys Coach at Beverly High School for 18 winter seasons and 17 spring season. He accumulated 214 wins with a .680 winning percentage, and was voted coach of the year on two occasions."

Desilvestre has a lot of coaching experience. He has coached more than two decades.

If you are still undecided to play Track and Field Desil-

vestre said it can be a positive experience.

"It's a good thing to participate other than just studying we try to have some fun we try to make it entertaining and positive experience so that they will hopefully develop friendship that will last the rest of their lives and memories that can tell their friends and family on the future..." Desilvestre said.

I ask him how it's different for the men and women's teams.

"Whatever I do with the men I do with the women -- the workout is basically the same their designed basically for whatever their ability is so it's equal opportunity situation everyone is treated the same..." he said. It's nothing different everything is the same.

Last year it was difficult not having a season in the spring because of the virus,

he said.

"It was extremely difficult. I think it hurt us in many ways, the kids that wanted to join the time obviously couldn't ... being a community college and only have them for two years... this year it's basically started from scratch starting from zero..." Desilvestre said.

They are no tryouts. If you are interested to join the team you can, the more athletes joining the team the better it is. You just need to get an athletic physical form at the Sports and Fitness building in the Haverhill campus. Athletes that is interested to join can get in touch with the head coach Nelson Desilvestre and the athletic director Dan Blair. This season will start some point on the spring when student return back to class.



Photo Courtesy neccknights.com

Men's and Women's head coach Nelson Desilvestre

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